

REMARKS

Claims 1-19 and 21-25 were pending in this application.

Claims 1-9, 15-18 and 21-25 have been rejected.

Claims 10-14 have been objected to.

Claims 1, 11, 12, 13, 18 and 19 have been amended as shown above.

Claim 10 has been canceled.

Claims 1-9, 11-19 and 21-25 remain pending in this application.

Reconsideration and full allowance of Claims 1-9, 11-19 and 21-25 are respectfully requested.

I. STATUS OF CLAIMS

The Applicant respectfully notes that the Office Action Summary and the Office Action identify different sets of claims that are rejected. Based on the Office Action, the Applicant believes that Claim 19 (an independent claim) and Claims 22 and 25 (dependent claims from Claim 19) have been rejected. If the Applicant is incorrect in the status of the claims, the Applicant respectfully requests clarification in the next Office communication.

II. ALLOWABLE CLAIMS

The Applicant thanks the Examiner for the indication that Claims 10-14 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to incorporate the elements of their respective base claims and any intervening claims. The Applicant has amended independent Claims 1, 18 and 19 to incorporate the allowable subject matter of Claim 10.

III. REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Office Action rejects Claims 1-5, 7, 15, 18, 21, 23 and 24 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,744,998 to Ito et al. (“*Ito*”). As the Applicant has amended independent Claims 1 and 18 to incorporate the previously indicated allowable subject matter of Claim 10, the Applicant respectfully submits that *Ito* does not anticipate the Applicant’s invention as recited in Claims 1 and 18 (and their dependent claims). Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the § 102 rejection and full allowance of Claims 1-5, 7, 15, 18, 21, 23 and 24.

IV. REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Office Action rejects Claims 1-9, 15-19 and 21-25 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,259,286 to Papaliolios (“*Papaliolios*”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,506,168 to Uya (“*Uya*”). As the Applicant has amended independent Claims 1, 18 and 19 to incorporate the previously indicated allowable subject matter of Claim 10, the Applicant respectfully submits that the combination of *Papaliolios* and *Uya* does not disclose, teach or suggest the Applicant’s invention as recited in Claims 1, 18 and 19 (and their dependent claims). Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the § 103 rejection and full allowance of Claims 1-9, 15-19 and 21-25.

V. CONCLUSION

The Applicant asserts that all pending claims in the application are in condition for allowance and respectfully requests an early allowance of such claims.

SUMMARY

If any issues arise, or if the Examiner has any suggestions for expediting allowance of this application, the Applicant respectfully invites the Examiner to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below or at wmunck@davismunck.com.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees connected with this communication (including any extension of time fees) or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0208.

Respectfully submitted,

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